

This Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): **A ~~[[P]]~~process** for preparation of a free-flowing granular sugar ingredient suitable for forming compressed confections, **the process** comprising:

feeding granulated sucrose and a solution of corn syrup to a screw-fed mixer wherein they are mixed to provide a uniform wet mixture of the sucrose coated with the corn syrup, wherein the corn syrup is employed in an amount within the range of from about 3 to 8% by weight, ~~the solids content of~~ **and** the corn syrup solution **is has a solids content of** from about 55 to 75% ~~and the sucrose is employed in an amount within the range of from about 90 to 96%~~ by weight;

discharging the wet mixture to a ~~sieve means~~ **size reduction comminutor** to break up lumps;

feeding the comminuted wet mixture to a drier to produce a dried mixture;

feeding the dried mixture to a sieve;

and

recovering granules of sucrose bound together by corn syrup solids.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A process according to claim 1, ~~the moisture is at a level to a level of less than about 3% by weight upon discharge from the mixer, and the moisture is reduced to a final level of~~ **wherein the wet mixture has a moisture content of less than about 3% by weight upon discharge from the mixer and the dried mixture has a moisture content of** less than about 1% **by weight.**

Claim 3 (currently amended): A process according to claim 1 wherein the sucrose has a grind size of ~~about 6X or finer~~ **from 10X to 4X** ~~and the corn syrup~~

~~solids content of the corn syrup solution is from about 59 to about 64% upon entering the mixer.~~

Claim 4 (canceled)

Claim 5 (currently amended): A process for preparation of a free-flowing granular sugar ingredient suitable for forming compressed confections, the process comprising:

feeding granulated sucrose and a solution of corn syrup to a screw-fed mixer wherein they are mixed to provide a uniform wet mixture of the sucrose coated with the corn syrup;

discharging the wet mixture to a ~~sieve means~~ size reduction comminutor to break up lumps;

feeding the comminuted wet mixture to a drier ~~to reduce the moisture to a predetermined lower moisture content to produce a dried mixture;~~

feeding ~~a resulting dry~~ the dried mixture ~~exiting the drier to a screen separator where excess fines and oversize particles are separated to a sieve;~~ and

recovering ~~correctly sized~~ granules of sucrose bound together by corn syrup solids, wherein from 40 to 80% of the recovered granules will pass through a 10 mesh screen and be retained on a 60 mesh screen.

Claim 6 (currently amended): A process according to claim 5 wherein the corn syrup is employed in an amount within the range of from about 3 to 8% by weight of the uniform wet mixture, the solids content of and the corn syrup solution is has a solids content of from about 55 to about 75% by weight and the sucrose is employed in an amount within the range of from about 90 to 96% by weight.

Claim 7 (currently amended): A process according to claim 5 wherein the ~~moisture is less than about~~ wet mixture discharged from the mixer contains less than about 5% by weight ~~upon discharge from the mixer~~ moisture.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A process according to claim 5 wherein the ~~moisture is reduced to a level of~~ dried mixture contains less than about 3% by weight ~~by the drier~~ moisture.

Claim 9 (currently amended): A process according to claim 5 wherein the sucrose has a grind size of ~~about 6X or finer~~ from 10X to 4X and the corn syrup ~~solution has a~~ solids content of ~~the corn syrup solution is~~ from about ~~59~~ 55 to about ~~64~~ 75% by weight upon entering the mixer.

Claim 10 (currently amended): A process according to claim 5 wherein the sucrose has a grind size of ~~about 6X or finer~~ from 10X to 4X, the ~~solids content of the~~ corn syrup solution ~~is~~ has a solids content of from about ~~59~~ 55 to about ~~64~~ 75% by weight upon entering the mixer, the corn syrup is employed in an amount within the range of from about 3 to 8% by weight of the uniform wet mixture, ~~the sucrose is employed in an amount within the range of from about 90 to 96% by weight~~, the ~~moisture is at a level to a level of less than about~~ wet mixture contains less than 5% by weight moisture upon discharge from the mixer, ~~and the moisture is reduced to a level of less than about 3% by weight in a wet mixture is dried in a~~ fluidized bed drier, and the dried mixture has a moisture content of less than about 3% by weight.

Claim 11 (currently amended): A process for preparation of a compressed confection, the process comprising:

- (a) preparing a granulated sugar ingredient by
 - feeding granulated sucrose and a solution of corn syrup to a screw-fed mixer wherein they are mixed to provide a uniform wet mixture of the sucrose coated with the corn syrup;
 - discharging the wet mixture to a ~~sieve means~~ size reduction comminutor to break up lumps;

feeding the comminuted wet mixture to a drier to produce a dried mixture;

feeding the dried mixture to a sieve; and

recovering granules of sucrose bound together by corn syrup solids;

- (b) mixing the granulated sugar ingredient with flavor; and
- (c) compressing the granulated sugar ingredient and flavor to form a compressed candy.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A process according to claim 11 wherein the sucrose has a grind size of ~~about 6X or finer~~ from 10 X to 4X, ~~the corn syrup solids content of~~ the corn syrup solution ~~is~~ has a solids content of from about ~~59 55~~ to about ~~64 75~~% by weight upon entering the mixer, and the corn syrup is employed in an amount within the range of from about 3 to 8% by weight of the uniform wet mixture, ~~and the sucrose is employed in an amount within the range of from about 90 to 96% by weight.~~

Claim 13 (currently amended): A process according to claim 11 wherein the ~~moisture is at a level~~ wet mixture has a moisture content of less than about 5% by weight upon discharge from the mixer.

Claim 14 (currently amended): A process according to claim 11 ~~which further includes the steps of:~~

feeding wherein the wet mixture ~~to~~ is dried in a fluidized bed drier ~~to reduce the moisture content to a predetermined lower moisture content.~~

Claim 15 (canceled)

Claim 16 (currently amended): A process according to claim ~~15~~ 14 wherein ~~the solids content of~~ the corn syrup solution ~~is~~ has a solids content of from about 55 to about 75% by weight.

Claim 17 (currently amended): A process according to claim 11 wherein from 40 to 80% of the recovered granules ~~in the final product~~ will pass through a 10 mesh screen and be retained on a 60 mesh screen.

Claim 18 (currently amended): A process according to claim 17 wherein the corn syrup is employed in an amount within the range of from about 3 to 8% by weight of the uniform wet mixture, ~~the sucrose is employed in an amount within the range of from about 90 to 96% by weight~~ and the ~~moisture is at a level of~~ wet mixture contains less than about 5% by weight moisture upon discharge from the mixer, ~~and the process includes the further steps: wherein~~
~~feeding the wet mixture to~~ is dried in a fluidized bed drier ~~to reduce the moisture content to a predetermined lower moisture content; and~~
~~feeding a resulting dry mixture exiting the drier to a screen separator where excess fines and oversize particles are separated.~~

Claim 19 (currently amended): A ~~product~~ free-flowing granulated sugar ingredient prepared according to the process of claim 1.

Claim 20 (currently amended): A ~~product~~ compressed confection prepared according to the process of claim 11.